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## THE LEGEND OF THE HOLY GRAIL.

### IV.

AN account has been given of prose romances in which a quest of the Grail is achieved by Perceval, grand-nephew of Joseph of Arimathæa. The chronology assumes that the Arthurian period belonged to the end of the first century. So ignorant a misconception could not long pass unchallenged; it was thought necessary to postpone the action by four hundred years; such extension of time was effected by insertion of a number of ancestors, described as protectors of the Grail and possessors of the country in which it was kept. Together with this alteration went a change more essential, in virtue of which the place of Perceval came to be filled by a hero to whom was given the name which in English orthography appears as Galahad. Tales making mention of this new actor belong to a time when efforts were made to bring into a connected whole the inconsistent narratives dealing with the fortunes of knights of the Round Table. This result was accomplished by means of a voluminous composition, in which the most important figure was Lancelot of the Lake, whose passion for Arthur's queen became the centre of the history. An introductory composition undertook to explain the descent of the chief Arthurian heroes from Joseph of Arimathæa; while the interval between the earlier history and the advent of Lancelot was filled by a biography of Merlin, now continued and expanded. In this manner the body of Arthurian narrative was brought into some sort of sequence; and it is only as forming integral parts of this extensive system of fiction that have survived tales dealing with Galahad as the accomplisher of the quest.

#### GRAND ST. GRAAL, OR NASCIEN.

This romance is a recast of the story of Joseph of Arimathæa composed by Robert de Boron; the remodeller chose to indicate Robert as author of his reconstruction. A modern editor, Hucher, accepting such statement as veritable, assumed that Robert had written two histories of the Grail, and printed the longer romance under the title of *Grand St. Graal*, designating the shorter composition as *Petit St. Graal*. For want of a better name, the misleading title has been retained; it would seem wiser to denominate the story according to the name of some one of its chief actors, preferably Nascien, who figures as ancestor of Lancelot and Galahad. The author called his story simply *estoire du Graal*.

The writer, who wishes to be thought a well-known hermit reluctant to give his name, audaciously describes his work as in the

nature of holy scripture written by the hand of God, who is said to have appeared in vision in the year 717 after the Passion, bringing the book, which on Ascension Day is to be taken up to heaven, and which the hermit is told to copy (of this book, as above observed, Robert de Boron is afterwards indicated as translator). After the preface narrating this vision are recited adventures of Joseph of Arimathæa, according to the model furnished by Robert, but with expansions. The romance then proceeds to deal, at great length, with the experience of certain converts of Joseph, namely, Evelach king of Sarraas near Babylon, his brother-in-law Josephe, and Celidoine, son of the latter. At Sarraas, by divine mandate, Josephe, son of Joseph, is consecrated as first Christian bishop, Christ himself performing the ordination: Evelach, who is at war with the king of Egypt, receives from Josephe a red-cross shield, with an injunction that it shall be uncovered only in time of mortal peril; this advice Evelach obeys, and in his utmost danger is saved by a (supernatural) white knight; he is baptized under the name of Mordrain, while Seraphe takes that of Nascien. In a vision, Mordrain sees his nephew Celidoine, son of Nascien, caught up to heaven, while nine rivers flow from his body; in eight of these a man from heaven washes his extremities, but in the ninth is completely immersed; the vision is expounded as having reference to the race of Celidoine, whose last descendants are Lancelot and Galahad.

The converts undergo a series of temptations and tribulations, being severally taken up by the Holy Ghost, and carried to rocky islets (the idea is borrowed from the temptation of Jesus); in this solitude Mordrain and Nascien suffer from assaults of the devil in feminine form, but are consoled by the daily visits of an old man (impersonating divine grace) who arrives in a self-sailing silver ship; eventually the three relations are brought together on a marvellous vessel, the ship of Solomon (emblematic of the Church), of which is given a curious and elaborately symbolic account.

Solomon having had an unfortunate experience of women, and indulging in satire of the sex, it is revealed to him that from his line shall come a virgin, through whom shall be made good the fall of our first parents; the race shall not end in this spotless maiden, but terminate in a virgin knight (Galahad), who shall deliver his people. Anxious to leave a memento for this descendant, Solomon, who in spite of his acrimony seems to be in the habit of taking the advice of his wife, constructs a wonderful vessel, in which he places a bed, with a crown at the head, and at the foot the sword of his father David, which for the purpose he furnishes with a new pommel; the hangings, supplied by Solomon's wife, are of tow, she declaring that they can be changed only by the daughter of a king (the sister

of Perceval, as related in the *Queste*). The bed is inclosed by a frame composed of two rods (presumably designed to sustain a canopy) rising perpendicularly from the centre of each side, and above crossed by a third; these rods (or spindles) are of the three symbolic colors, white for chastity, green for long-suffering, and red for charity; they are made from a scion of the Tree of Life, the wood of which has undergone three changes of color corresponding to the periods of primeval innocence, of the fall, and of the redemption; the vessel is only to be entered by persons of perfect faith.

On board of the ship is also taken a princess of Persia, the sole survivor of a vessel in which she has sailed; the princess must have been an acquaintance of Celidoine, he having already been described as preaching the gospel in that country, but as set adrift by jealous barons. Before reaching port, Celidoine is carried away by a mysterious bark and landed in Britain, whither also proceed Joseph of Arimathæa and his company, who use Joseph's shirt as a miraculous conveyance, preceded by the Grail, carried by bearers who walk on the sea; Celidoine comes to the city of Galefort, and preaches to the duke of that city; Mordrain, Nascien, and the princess arrive at Mordrain's country, but before Nascien can be reached by his wife he sets out in search of his lost son, and is carried by Solomon's ship to Britain, where he joins the party of Joseph, and in Galefort finds Celidoine. Joseph temporarily retires to the forest of Broceliande in Scotland; Josephe preaches the gospel in Britain, but is thrown into prison by the cruel king of North Wales; Mordrain, in Sarras, is notified by a dream, and makes a military expedition for Josephe's release, taking with him his own wife Sarracinte, Flegentine wife of Nascien, and the Persian princess. Mordrain finds his kinsmen in Galefort, and in the resulting war the king of North Wales is slain and Josephe released; the princess of Persia is united in marriage to Celidoine, who becomes king of Britain, and from this alliance descends the Grail hero. Sarracinte bears a son Galaad, who gives his name to *Gales* or Wales, and is ancestor of Urien (father of Yvain).

The romance proceeds to recite the story of Bron, Alein, Moys, and Petrus, as told by Robert de Boron, but with many expansions, the scene now being laid in Britain. Pier (Petrus) becomes king of the city of Orcanie and ancestor of Lot and Gawain. Mordrain, while approaching too near the Grail, is blinded by a hot wind, but in answer to his prayer receives a divine promise that he shall not pass from earth before looking on the face of Galaad (Galahad), the last of his line. With the exception of Mordrain and Celidoine, the actors simultaneously pass away; Josephe, in dying, retraces with his blood the red cross on the shield of Mordrain, which is deposited

in the abbey where Nascien is interred, there to await the advent, after four hundred years, of the last of his race (Galahad).

The story concludes by relating the lineage of the Grail hero on the father's and mother's side, in an equal number of generations. Instead of Alein, Josue, brother of Josephe, is substituted as ancestor (so that Galahad comes directly from Joseph of Arimathæa). Josue marries the daughter of a king Alphasan, who builds for the Grail the castle of Corbenic; from the danger of approaching too near the holy vessel, the hall of the castle receives the name of *Palais Adventureus* (as that of Sarra is called *Palais Esperitel*). In consequence of the divine wrath resulting from the slaying of Lambor (great-grandfather of Galahad) by a certain Varlan (or Bruillant), the kingdom becomes waste, and takes the name of *Terre Gaste* instead of *Terre Foraine*. The son of Lambor is Pellehan, who approaches too near the holy vessel, and is wounded by a divine weapon; it is predicted that he shall be healed only by his grandson (Galahad). His son is Pelles, the Fisher King, whose daughter (unnamed), through Lancelot of the Lake, becomes mother of Galahad. The descendants of Celidoine are enumerated, ending in Lancelot and Galahad; it is stated that the story will be continued in the tale of Merlin.

In spite of its prolixity and involution, the scheme of the elaborate narrative appears sufficiently simple. The whole composition seems intended to pave the way for the advent of a new Grail-hero, who shall be a son of Lancelot of the Lake, as well as a scion of the race of Joseph of Arimathæa. It was thought essential to provide this personage with an ancestry as imposing as that in earlier tales ascribed to Perceval; such end was accomplished by the introduction of a new group, Mordrain, Nascien, and Celidoine, answering to Joseph, Bron, and Alein of the tale of Robert de Boron. The adventures of this trio, although in appearance involved, really constitute an allegory, depicting the trials of new converts, their sustenance by divine grace, their tossing in the agitated waters of the world, and their deliverance in the ship of the church. The poem of Robert naturally falls into two portions, severally reciting his imprisonment and release, and the service and surrender of the Grail; in order to insert the new material, these divisions are separated, and the additional matter intercalated. Designing to derive from his main actors the families of the principal knights of the Round Table, the writer prefers that part of the action shall pass in Britain; in order to accomplish this purpose, it is necessary to represent Joseph of Arimathæa as an evangelist in that island. In accordance with current legend, Robert had described Joseph as a

soldier, whereas in the opinion of the later romancer the head of the pilgrim community ought to figure as a representative of Holy Church ; accordingly, the personality of Joseph is divided, and the greater part of his activity now assigned to a son Josephe, who, as divinely ordained proto-bishop, is able to typify the clergy. In spite of this complex allegory, the writer is rather a novelist than a theologian, has at heart more the inditing of an agreeable story than the maintenance of a doctrinal thesis ; his composition, as already remarked, is intended as an introduction to a body of fiction, in which the achiever of the quest was represented as Galahad. It seems reasonable to suppose that the long romance, occupying some eight hundred pages in the edition of Hucher, may have reached its present form only as the ultimate of several successive editions. The continuing invention of new episodes is attested by the manuscripts ; one long addition has been printed by Hucher. Nevertheless, if the analysis here given be correct, it would appear to follow that the outlines of the story must have belonged to the tale as first devised.

A notice by a Cistercian chronicler, Helinandus, has been thought to furnish means for a determination of time. This writer mentions, under a date of about 717, that at this time a hermit in Britain was shown by an angel a wonderful vision concerning Joseph, a noble decurion, who took down from the cross the body of our Lord, and concerning the dish (*catino illo vel paropside*) in which the Lord supped with the disciples, and in which by the same hermit had been written a story termed *gradale*. Now, says the chronicler, in the French tongue *gradalis* or *gradale* signifies a dish (*scutella*) wide and somewhat deep, in which costly viands are commonly served in courses (*gradatim*), one morsel after another in various arrangement. In the vulgar speech it is also termed *greal*, as to the partaker grateful (*grata*), and acceptable as well by reason of the containing vessel, made of silver or other expensive material, as for the sake of the contents, namely, the manifold service of various meats. The history, as he says, he failed to find in Latin, but only in French, in which form it was possessed by certain nobles, but even thus not easy to be found complete.

It would seem self-evident that this notice refers to the present romance, with which it corresponds in virtue of date, the description of the Grail, and the mention of the work as introductory. As Helinandus ended his chronicles in 1204, it has been assumed that the composition took place at that time ; but such ground appears unstable. The existing form of the prose tale seems to imply a later date ; Gaston Paris tentatively suggests about 1240.

In the Nascien the functions of the holy vessel are similar to those which it performs in the poem of Robert. It is carried by

the pilgrims in their wanderings in an ark (symbolical of the ark of the covenant); it is placed as the chief object on a table (corresponding to that of the eucharist), at which the righteous are fed with such food as they may desire (*ke on peust desirer*, Hucher, vol. ii. p. 367). It is described as covered by a paten (i. 212). But there is a cardinal distinction, in that while in Robert's account the Grail is but a name for the eucharistic chalice, in the recast it is defined as the dish in which was served the Paschal Lamb. Hence the idea becomes confused, and the vessel is degraded to a talisman; in feeding the multitude, it is placed on the table, and the bread is multiplied as in the example of the miracle of the loaves and fishes.

The difficulties which this alteration of definition occasioned are exhibited in the elaborate and interesting account of the episcopal consecration of Josephe (ed. Hucher, vol. ii. p. 173 ff.), in which the writer has endeavored to make his narration conform to the practice of the cathedral churches of his day. The ark holding the Grail is represented as standing in the great hall of the Palais Esperitel at Sarraz; a knowledge of its contents is given through a series of visions of a mystical character.

(1.) Standing before the open door of the ark, Josephe sees Christ surrounded by angels bearing the instruments of the Passion, cross, nails, lance, sponge, scourge; presently the Redeemer is seen to be fixed on the cross and pierced by the lance, while the blood runs down into the holy vessel below his feet (the Grail).

(2.) Joseph, noticing the absorption of his son, presses forward, and obtains quite a different spectacle. In the ark stands an altar, covered with a white cloth surmounted by a red one. On one side of the altar reposes the lance-head, on the other the Grail, while in the centre stands a golden cup covered by a golden plate (chalice and paten), the cup containing the wine, and the plate the bread. Before the altar (facing Joseph) is seen a lifted hand holding a cross (a hand extended from a cloud being a symbol of deity), opposite (between Joseph and the altar), two hands carrying candles.

(3.) While so occupied, Joseph hears open the door of a chamber (probably a chamber in which the Grail is supposed to be kept, as is the case in Corbenic); he turns his head, and sees a procession pass through the door and enter the hall. In advance come angels, who act as aspergers and thurifers; an angel whose forehead is signed with letters (as in the sacred art of the time), bears the holy vessel, which reposes on a green cloth, while on one side is carried Holy Scripture, on the other a drawn sword. Behind proceed angelic candle-bearers, with candles of the three symbolic colors; last advances the risen Christ, robed as a priest. The procession makes circuit of the palace, and halts in front of the altar, making obeis-

sances. Supernatural persons habited as clergy bring forth vestments and array Josephe, Christ himself bestowing mitre, crosier, and ring, and expounding the symbolic significance of episcopal robes.

(4.) The consecration having thus been performed, Josephe is able to celebrate mass and enters the ark, which supernaturally enlarges to receive him (the ark answering to the chancel, which only priests may tread), while the people remain without. The altar is supposed to be arranged as before described, the chalice being surmounted by the paten holding the bread. The celebrant uttering the words of consecration, the wine is changed into blood and the bread to the body of Christ; from the paten the officiator takes the host, and perceives that the figure of a child has taken the place of the bread; he dismembers and partakes, while angels make genuflection. This done, attendant angels receive the paten and chalice, and return to the holy vessel, the paten on top of the chalice; the angels once more elevate and carry forth paten, cup, and vessel in procession through the building; the faithful communicate (but so far as the account shows, only of the bread). The sacred utensils are returned to the altar; the bishop disrobes, the vestments are placed in the ark, and a treasurer is appointed to take in charge the sacred objects.

In this curious account it will be seen that the arrangement of chalice and paten answers to that described in the words of Honorius of Auxerre, above noticed as paraphrased by Robert de Boron, and as forming the centre of his poem; the paten lies on the cup, serving as its cover, while plate and chalice are elevated in one act. To Robert this description presents no difficulty, inasmuch as with him the Grail is but a proper name for the cup; but the remodeller, embarrassed by his conception of the holy vessel as a dinner-dish, does not know in what way to utilize it in the ceremony, and can find no better resort than to make it serve the purpose of a receptacle; while he assigns to the chalice, conceived as a different vessel, the function which Robert had given to the Grail, now inconsistently made to occupy a subordinate position. Such manner of representation seems to be quite consonant with the theory that the progress of the legend consisted in a series of attempts to concord the independent and contradictory stories of Crestien and Robert.

In the latter part of the romance, the surroundings of the vessel are similar to the circumstances narrated in the *Queste*; it is kept in the upper chamber of the castle of Corbenic, whence of its own accord at night it enters the main hall, carried by unseen bearers, only the sound of whose wings is heard, and where service is performed before it by saints and angels; the place is too holy to be



used as a sleeping-chamber (vol. iii. p. 291). This more fantastic account may seem to suggest the labor of a different hand.

In the romance of Pellesvaus, above mentioned, it is stated that the Grail is susceptible of five different transmutations of shape, one being the eucharistic chalice; it served as the first cup used in the dominions of Arthur. The mention may be thought to indicate that the writer of the Pellesvaus was acquainted with inconsistent representations of the holy vessel, in one of which it figured as a cup of the sacrament; and certainly the manner of notice seems indicative of a later period of composition than that of the Grand St. Graal.

#### AGRAVAIN.

The long Lancelot romance consists of several distinct editions, reciting respectively the youth of the hero, his advent at court, and the incipency of his passion for the queen (Galahad), his rescue of Guinevere from the mysterious land to which she has been taken by a ravisher (Chevalier de la Charrette), the quarrel of Lancelot with the queen, and his madness (Agravain), the quest of the Holy Grail (Queste), and the fall of the kingdom of Arthur (Mort Artus). The third and fourth of these divisions are connected as preface and sequel of a single story.

Although repeatedly included among early productions of the printing-press, the Lancelot has not as yet been critically edited from the manuscripts; in particular the Agravain is accessible only through a very brief abstract of P. Paris, and through the version of Sir Thomas Malory, in the twelfth and thirteenth books of his *Morte Darthur*, including only selected portions of the narrative. The variations of Malory from the usual French text of the romance have been pointed out by H. O. Sommer in his edition of the English writer.

As already remarked, the Agravain supplies an introduction to the story of the Queste. In the course of adventures, Lancelot arrives at Corbenic, the castle of Pelles, the maimed Fisher King; in order to fulfil an oracle, without Lancelot's intention, a meeting is arranged between him and Elaine, daughter of Pelles; the fruit of this encounter is Galahad, who is reared in Corbenic, and there seen as a babe by Bohor, in the course of a visit to the castle. Bohor passes a night of trial in the Palais Adventureus; being wounded, he is left in the hall, and there visited and healed by the Grail, which enters through the windows, preceded by a censer-bearer (a flying serpent or dove, according to different versions), and carried by a (supernatural) white-robed maiden, not clearly discernible. Bohor afterwards comes to the door of the chamber in which is kept the vessel, and sees it standing on a silver table, while a person habited as bishop (presumably Joseph) says mass before it. The appear-

ance of Perceval at Arthur's court is related. The writer introduces the Gallic wars of Arthur, followed by the Pentecostal feast described by Geoffrey of Monmouth ; in the account of the latter this festival is immediately followed by the Roman wars and the struggle with Mordred ; but the French romancer intercalates a long period containing the exploits of the knights of the Round Table in Britain. The daughter of Pelles attends this festival, as does Lancelot ; the latter, once more unintentionally unfaithful to the queen, is reproved by the latter, and in consequence loses his mind, flying to the forest. After various experiences, he comes as a want-wit to Corbenic, is found by Elaine, and carried before the Grail to be healed. Accompanied by Elaine, he withdraws to a retreat called the Joyous Isle, whence, through the agency of his half-brother, Hector de Mares, and Perceval, he is once more induced to visit the court. By this time the young Galahad has reached the period of an independent resolution ; desiring to be near his father, he asks and obtains permission to be transferred from Corbenic to an abbey near Camelot, where his education is intrusted to a hermit-tutor. A lapse of some years is now presumed to take place.

#### QUESTE DEL SAINT GRAAL.

This part of the Lancelot has been separately printed by Furnivall, but only from one MS. There exists also a Welsh translation, of a very faithful and literal character, but, as compared with the French text, exhibiting a number of omissions ; it would seem that the Welsh manuscript represents a better text, the increments being invariably the result of interpolation. Whether there is in existence any French text answering to that of the Welsh version, can only be determined by a future critical edition.

The story is continued from the Agravain, the tale relating a visit of Lancelot to the abbey of nuns where Galahad resides, the knighting of the youth, his advent in Arthur's court, and his extraction of a sword from a block of marble (the incident is imitated after that related in the Merlin concerning a similar feat of Arthur). The Holy Grail appears, covered by a white napkin (the color of chastity), carried as usual by invisible bearers, and passes before the tables, causing these to be supplied with all desirable food ; the knights vow a quest, not to be intermitted until they shall reach the court (of the Fisher King), where such fare is daily supplied. Galahad is owned chief of the questers, who pursue their several ways ; he is provided with the red-cross shield hanging in the abbey where Nascien is interred (as recited in the romance treating of the latter), and performs feats allegorically interpreted, driving away the evil spirit that has taken up residence in the body of an entombed knight,

and releasing the imprisoned damsels of the castle of maidens (symbolical of souls in hell). Gawain and Perceval are overthrown by Galahad, who disappears, pursued by the others; Gawain and other knights fail to obtain opportunities of distinction (a failure emblematic of their unregenerate condition). Lancelot finds the Holy Grail standing on the altar of a lonely chapel, whence it descends in order to heal a sick knight, but falls asleep, and fails to honor the sacred vessel. The adventures of Perceval are related at length; he learns from an aunt that the quest is to be achieved by three persons, two virgins (Galahad and himself) and one chaste (Bohor); he arrives at the abbey of Mordrain, and sees the aged king; he is tempted by the devil, but consoled by the aged mariner (the same who appears in the Nascien story), and is taken away by a vessel that touches at his isle (after the manner of the characters in the romance last named). Gawain and Lancelot arrive at the cell of a hermit named Nascien (a different person from the Nascien of the Grand St. Grail), and are rebuked as personified Pride and Ostentation; Lancelot submits to scourging, and promises amendment, while Gawain is informed that he is to have no part in the quest. Adventures of Bohor are related; in time of need he abandons his brother in order to rescue a maiden, and finally enters the vessel which carries Perceval. The two are joined by Galahad, who is guided by Perceval's sister; they go to sea, and on an island discover Solomon's ship, concerning which is given the same account found in the Nascien story. The lady renews the hangings of the sword of David, which she supplies with cords of her own hair, dedicated to that use from the day of Galahad's knighthood; she presents Galahad with the sword, named the Sword of Strange Hangings. The voyagers land in Scotland; the sister of Perceval gives her blood to heal a leprous lady and perishes, giving directions that her body shall be put on board a ship without a crew, in order that the vessel may be wafted to Sarras, where she wishes to be buried in the Palais Esperitel. The three knights separate; Lancelot finds the ship conveying Perceval's sister, and here remains half a year in company with his son Galahad. A white knight bids them depart in order to complete the Adventures of Britain. Lancelot, in the course of wanderings, comes to Corbenic, and sees the Grail in the chamber, where it is covered with a green napkin, on a silver table, while mass is said by a mysterious priest, and angels swing censers. At the elevation of the host, Lancelot sees the celebrant overweighted by three men (the bread which has taken the form of the Trinity); he starts forward to assist him, but is struck down by a hot wind; on coming to himself he is told that his quest is ended. Hector arrives, but does not know that he

has reached the goal, and abandons the quest in shame. Galahad comes to Mordrain's abbey, and heals the sick king; he finally joins Bohor, in whose company during five years, he achieves the Adventures of Britain, and the two at last arrive at Corbenic.

The conclusion is of the most curt brevity. Galahad is recognized with joy, as an absentee of many years. Concerning the healing of the maimed being, nothing seems to be said; the French text, by an interpolation, has remedied the omission. The questers are led into the palace, where the Grail is seen standing on a silver table, and left alone, accompanied only by a (symbolic) maiden. Nine mysterious knights (who seem to typify the communion of saints) appear and unite in the ceremony. Josephe, first Christian bishop ordained by Christ at Sarras, descends from heaven in order to perform the rite; after the bread has been consecrated, the Redeemer replaces the celebrant, and himself dispenses the host. Christ informs the questers concerning the nature of the Holy Vessel, as the dish of the Paschal Lamb, and directs them to follow the Grail to Sarras, whither it will presently retire. Accordingly, the three proceed to the shore, where they find the ship of Solomon, and whither proceed the Grail and table. In the port of Sarras they find the vessel containing the body of Perceval's sister; they suffer persecution from a heathen tyrant, but the latter dies, and by divine command Galahad is made king. A year after the coronation, Josephe again descends and celebrates mass; when the plate which covers the holy vessel is raised, Christ appears within the Grail, and Galahad, according to his desire, passes away in ecstatic vision. Perceval dies as a hermit, while Bohor finally returns to Arthur's court, where he tells the story.

The French text adds that the account had been written out by order of King Arthur, and deposited in the abbey of Salisbury, where it was found by Walter Map, who translated it for King Henry.

The central feature of this composition is the figure of Galahad. The name (as Heinzel has pointed out) is biblical, Galaad being, in the Vulgate, the name of that great-grandson of Joseph who in the English version (Numbers xxvi. 29, and elsewhere) is styled Gilead. In Judges x. 18, where the English translation has, "He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead," the Latin renders *erit dux populi Galaad*; the romancer may hence have derived the idea of making Galahad king of the people (biblical names are common among kings of the line as given in Grand St. Graal). The sonance with *Gales*, Wales, may also have had weight. That the proper names Galaad and Lancelot are repeated in the story, being

applied also to other members of the family, does not appear to need explanation, being entirely in keeping with the art of the narrator.

Some incidents of the story are parallel to those recited in the Perceval romances. That the Grail is made to emigrate from the castle of the quest to a home beyond the waves is in correspondence with the narrative of the Pellesvaus. The latter also mentions the red-cross shield, but as belonging to Joseph, who, being a soldier, might well leave such a relic to a descendant. The appearance of Galahad at court is quite correspondent to that of Perceval in the prose romance. Speaking more generally, the idea of a quest after the holy vessel is identical in both classes of tales. That the Galahad story is essentially a recast of that relating to Perceval may perhaps be thought evident from the alteration of time and insertion of additional generations of ancestors; but it does not follow that the extant Perceval romances can be shown to be earlier.

In the *Queste*, the description of the Grail shows a tendency to become more talismanic and less symbolic. From the chamber in which it is kept it proceeds to the hall of the palace, exactly how does not appear. Here Galahad finds it on the silver table; it seems an inconsistency that the spear (and, in the French text, a napkin) has to be carried in procession from the chamber. From this residence the Grail proceeds through Britain, on errands of healing and mercy.

In the final and most important part of the story the celebrant is Josephe, and reference is made to his consecration as first Christian bishop, a mention showing that the author had in mind the *Grand St. Graal*, which introduces this personage. Ritually considered, the account of the *Queste* is unintelligible. The bleeding lance is said to be placed in such manner as to exude into the Grail, filling it with blood; presently, in obvious contradiction, it is stated that the vessel serves as depositary of the sacramental bread. Over the lance-head and the Grail is laid a napkin; but in the second service we read that the vessel is covered by a paten, an arrangement only proper for the eucharistic cup. In the first ceremony Christ himself rises from the bread and feeds the communicants, so that the vision is complete; in the second, only a partial glimpse of the Redeemer is obtained; thus we have bathos where climax is intended. The words put into the mouth of Christ are of childish simplicity; they answer to Christ's admonition to the newly consecrated bishop in the antecedent romance, where they possess some applicability. It would seem that the writer of the *Queste* modelled his relation on the story of the ordination as related in the *Grand St. Graal*; what there is reasonable and intelligible, regarded as a mystic account of an ecclesiastical rite, in the brief imitation of the *Queste* becomes

little better than nonsense. The idea to be conveyed is, that the mystery of the Grail, in other words the secret of a holy life, consists in the reception, through ecstatic vision, of the self-incarnating Redeemer, a privilege accorded solely to participants in the office of the mass, and only to such of these as are able to lead a religious, that is to say, an ascetic life ; so long as this conception is set forth, the author is quite indifferent to the consistency of details.

The Agravain recites the manner in which Galahad was born, and how he came to be a resident of an abbey near Camelot. The *Queste* presupposes such history, and cannot therefore be regarded as an independent composition, but only as another volume of an elaborate novel. That the productions are not entirely consistent shows that they were not produced at one time by one hand.

That the same remark applies to other portions of the *Lancelot* story is proven by the introduction of Bohor as one of the questers, he being chaste, albeit no virgin knight ; such mention has relation to a chapter of the *Lancelot* story reciting a corresponding adventure of Bohor.

With relation to the *Grand St. Graal*, or *Nascien* romance, the case is similar. It has been shown that the final and principal chapter of the *Queste* seems to be modelled on the former story. So also the abstract given of the history of the converts Mordrain, *Nascien*, and *Celidoine* refers to the earlier romance, in which, as already observed, the motive is allegorical. The same is true of the introduction of the ship of Solomon, which in the *Grand St. Graal* has a function as serving to transport the actors, as well as to typify the delivering church ; in the *Queste*, the vessel appears to be dragged in merely for the purpose of decoration.

On the other hand, even although the *Nascien* story may have been earlier than the existing form of the *Queste*, and served as a model for the latter, yet it seems clear that it must have been composed to serve as preface for a tale of the quest in which the achiever was a son of *Lancelot* ; furthermore, the relation as now preserved has been edited in such manner as to bring it into accord with the extant version of the *Queste*.

The conclusion must be, that the several works mentioned form a body of romance, every part of which has been edited and reëdited with reference to every other. In this task have been engaged many hands, the resulting stories never being brought to absolute uniformity ; various stages in the development may be conjecturally indicated, but it seems very improbable that complete apprehension will ever be attained ; one might as well turn a telescope on a mirage as expect by methods of minute scholarship to solve such a problem. On general principles, it may be presumed that the reputation of

Galahad, as substitute for Perceval, the earlier hero of the quest, had been established by some one work of merit, which we possess only in the form of the developments to which it gave rise ; but as recasts give small idea of originals, it will be safest to assume that no notion can be obtained respecting the nature of such supposititious story.

The complication of the extant romances is still further increased by indications that in addition to the *Queste* as now preserved existed other French versions of the history. An example of such an independent narrative is furnished by a Portuguese work entitled "*Demanda do Santo Graall*," doubtless the rendering of a lost French original. The "*Demanda*" has only in part been printed ; so far as accessible, it makes the impression of a story yet more sophisticated than the *Queste*, and exhibiting still further advance in the evolution of the cycle. In any case, the existence of such a production goes to make clear the extent to which each successive editor indulged his fancy, his alterations being limited only by his powers of invention and adaptation.

Setting aside questions of origin, and regarding the *Queste* as a much edited conglomerate, in which the material was finally brought into a form deemed suitable for incorporation in the *Lancelot* romance, it still appears possible to decipher the motives presiding over the construction. The Holy Grail being considered as representing the central mystery of the faith, the eternal self-sacrifice of Christ, as represented in the ceremony of the mass, it was necessary that the possessor of the vessel should exhibit a character in conformity with the ecclesiastical ideal of the Christian life. This ideal of excellence was that belonging to monastic asceticism ; for such presentation the figure of Perceval, as it had been drawn by *Crestien*, was too human ; it therefore was thought necessary to invent a new hero, who should more perfectly answer to the conventional conception of laudable piety. For the sake of popularity, as well as of artistic contrast, this person was made a son of the admired *Lancelot*, to whose unlawful passion he offered the most complete opposition. In order not to break too violently with a form of the tale still accepted, it was considered worth while to associate Perceval as a subordinate hero of the quest ; to avoid awkward duplication, and secure a symbolic trinity, *Bohor*, cousin of *Lancelot*, was added to the group. *Lancelot*, though rejected with the pride of the churchman who sets foot on the magnificence of the world, was yet treated with the respect due to his office as main hero of the long narrative in which the story of the quest was to be only an episode. Other knights of the Round Table were introduced merely for the purpose of expressing reprobation of secular splendor. In the por-

trait of the central personage, care was taken to remove every trait that implied failure or disappointment ; in Galahad was to be exhibited only the shining forth of spiritual glory manifest in the Christ of whom he is avowedly a copy. The character of the hero, apparently chivalric, is in reality ecclesiastical, and the narrative an eulogium, under the form of the novel, of monasticism and especially of celibacy.

It may be doubted how far such manner of representation was the expression of individual conviction, how far of conscious art. The *Queste* was designed as one volume of a fashionable romance, of which other volumes were intended to possess sentimental attraction ; such inconsistency in no wise disturbed the author, who was not incommoded by the knowledge that his pious construction depended on a discreditable intrigue.

Respecting the characteristics of the story, the present writer has observed, in the Introduction of a recent work : "The narrative exhibits no development of personality, no characteristic portraiture ; having its chief literary merit in an agreeable style, it proceeds with the cold indifference of a writer who is conscious that his tale is an allegory. The outward world can scarce be said to exist ; we are in the realm of religious ideas, supernatural forces of light and darkness, of whose struggle the visible universe is merely a symbol. Accepting this conception, the story is devoid of depth ; in this drama the actors are as mechanical as the properties ; the reader asks himself whether the creator of the play aimed at any end higher than the production of a fashionable novel. If such was his purpose, the task was a success. The prose style permitted the supposition, encouraged by the tenor of the narrative, that it was entitled to the credit of history ; incorporation with the adventures of Lancelot favored its authority ; while, in return, the attraction of the new romance extended the influence of a body of fiction capable equally of gratifying sentimental taste and appealing to religious austerity. In such manner, and through popular preference for masses over details, for myth above character, the fame of Galahad came to supersede that of the more human Perceval."

It has been especially in modern English literature that the romance has exercised influence. This effect has been attained in virtue of the enthusiasm of Malory, in whose abstract the tale assumed a freshness not to be found in his French original, and from whom the narrative passed into the hands of Tennyson, in whose beautiful lines it came to represent quite a different order of ethical ideas.



NOTE. — Already has been mentioned the discussion of R. Heinzel, "Über die Französischen Gralamane," in the *Denkschriften d. Kais. Akad. d. Wiss.*, Phil.-hist. Classe, vol. xl. iii., Vienna, 1892. — In my *King Arthur and the Table Round, tales chiefly after the Old French of Crestien of Troyes*, 2 vols., Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston and New York, 1897, I have given a version of some of the important passages of the *Queste* after the text of Furnivall. In this text is an important error; the name of Joseph is substituted for that of Josephe (son of Joseph) as celebrant of the mass before the Grail, at the advent of Galahad. It seems plain that the writer of the *Queste* knew and used the *Grand St. Graal*, which must therefore be considered as the earlier work; the relation extends to the language of the passage. — The Portuguese *Demanda* has been partly edited by K. v. Reinhardstoettner, Berlin, 1889 (but only to the extent of one volume). An opinion has been expressed that the Portuguese work represents an older form of the *Queste*. This view is examined and rejected by Heinzel, pp. 162-171. So far as the *Demanda* has been printed, it seems to correspond closely to the *Queste*, with the interpretation of extraneous matter, partly after the data of the romance of Tristan; such manner of expansion is quite in the usual line of later versions of a story, and no reason has been given which requires the modern reader to take any other view. — For the Latin of Helinandus, see A. Nutt, *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*, pp. 52, 53.

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